



Secretary of the Air Force
Office of Legislative Liaison

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING RESUME

106TH Congress * First Session*

Date: 21 Oct 99

Full Committee Hearing on the Status of Forces

COMMITTEE: House Armed Services

The Honorable Floyd D. Spence (R-2-SC)

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Republicans

SPENCE, Floyd (SC)*

HUNTER, Duncan (CA)*

KASICH, John (OH)*

HANSEN, James (UT)*

WELDON, Curt (PA)

SAXTON, Jim (NJ)

BUYER, Steve (IN)*

McHUGH, John (NY)*

TALENT, James (MO)*

BARTLETT, Roscoe (MD)*

McKEON, Buck (CA)

THORNBERRY, Mac (TX)*

HOSTETTLER, John (IN)*

HILLEARY, Van (TN)*

SCARBOROUGH, Joe (FL)

GRAHAM, Lindsey (SC)

RYUN, Jim (KS)*

GIBBONS, Jim (NV)*

BONO, Mary (CA)

PITTS, Joseph (PA)

KUYKENDALL, Steve (CA)*

SHERWOOD, Donald (PA)

Democrats

SKELTON, Ike (MO)*

SISISKY, Norman (VA)*

ORTIZ, Solomon (TX)*

PICKETT, Owen (VA)*

TAYLOR, Gene (MS)*

ABERCROMBIE, Neil (HI)

UNDERWOOD, Robert (Guam)*

KENNEDY, Patrick (RI)

REYES, Silvestre (TX)*

ALLEN, Tom (ME)

TURNER, Jim (TX)

SMITH, Adam (WA)

MALONEY, James (CT)

McINTYRE, Mike (NC)*

McKINNEY, Cynthia (GA)

TAUSCHER, Ellen (CA)*

HILL, Baron (IN)*

THOMPSON, Mike (CA)*

*** Note: Members present**

WITNESSES: General Michael E. Ryan, Air Force Chief of Staff
General Eric K. Shinseki, Army Chief of Staff
Admiral Jay L. Johnson, Chief of Naval Operations
General James L. Jones, Commandant, United States Marine Corps

Information contained in this resume was obtained during an open hearing. It will not be released outside of the Department of Defense (DOD) agencies until published hearing transcripts have been released by the Committee, and only to the extent it is in accordance with published hearing procedures.

Committee was called to order at 1310

SUMMARY

Very friendly hearing with all Members emphasizing that they support the Services and are doing all they can to help them. Rep Bateman (R-1-VA) stressed twice during the hearing that it was up to the Service Chiefs to let the Committee know what areas they have budget shortfalls.

Chairman Spence's Opening Remarks

Said Operation Allied Force was the equivalent of a major theater war and at the height of the air campaign in the Balkans, a greater percentage of the Air Force was flying than was deployed during the Persian Gulf War. Because of a 40 percent reduction in size since the Gulf war, the Air Force was forced to draw critical assets from other theaters in order to meet the demands of the Kosovo conflict. This action resulted in a domino-like effect as the Air Force and other services had to move forces around and implement a number of stopgap measures in other critically important theaters, he said. He blamed the administration for taking a budget approach to national security rather than one based on threats. Stated he was depending on the Service Chiefs to make the case that they need more money to solve chronic funding shortfalls.

Ranking Member Rep Skelton's Opening Remarks

Told the Chiefs there were two problems Congress cannot fix "esprit" in the personnel ranks nor the gap between military and civilian sectors. Believes building and maintaining "esprit" in the military is a critical factor to help retention. He perceived the gap between the military and civilians as one of misunderstandings. The public should not view military members as any different because they wear a uniform. Said appreciation and understanding of the military are things that have to be addressed.

Gen Ryan's Opening Remarks

Said as he testified last year, the Air Force needed \$5 billion a year across the future year defense plan to make our force whole again and that the Air Force has received commitment in the President's budget for \$2.5 billion of that requirement in FY00. Indicated to the Committee that we still have unfunded requirements which contribute to our readiness shortfalls. Emphasized the Air Force is not a simultaneous 2 MTW force. Under a near simultaneous scenario, forces would swing from one theater to the other. 99% of the force is required to go to one or the other

within 30 days. Overall combat readiness is down an additional 5% since his March appearance before the Committee for a total of 23% readiness decline since 1996, he said. Indicated mission capable rates for major Air Force weapon systems steadily declined by nearly 10% since 1991 to a mission capability rate of 74% today. Relayed Air Force officers and airmen are still deploying 4 times as often with 40% smaller force than the Cold War.

Rep Sisisky

Alluding to the protection of the Social Security Trust Fund, said he did not foresee a big release of more money in the next budget cycle. Emphasized the need for more LD/HD assets such as EA6-B, AWACs, and KC-135s. These assets had to be taken away from other theaters in the Kosovo conflict, he said. Asked the Chiefs if they were prepared to add more money to those programs. Concluded by saying the Committee needed to work on the F-22 and other high-ticket items and decide how they were going to fund them.

Gen Ryan

Said the Air Force used 40% of its LD/HD assets in Kosovo. Relayed money has been put against LD/HD assets to include personnel and training. Predator and Global Hawk were two programs Gen Ryan told them which were coming on line to help. Stressed to Members that every LD/HD asset needs protection by aircraft such as the F-22.

Rep Hefley

Addressed Air Force infrastructure funding for FY01. Asked Gen Ryan why the Air Force was planning to submit a budget request for military construction that is below what it really needs. (Note: Rep Hefley is chairman of the Military Installations and Facilities Subcommittee)

Gen Ryan

Replied the FY01 military construction budget was incomplete and no final decisions have been made. Acknowledged Air Force was looking at tradeoffs, but remain confident we would improve our position.

Rep Taylor

Said the Services need to fix the military health care problem. Floated the notion of freezing troop levels. Felt the arbitrary letting go of troops was demoralizing to those who wish to make the military a career.

Rep Buyer

In his remarks, called on the services to maintain consistency in funding levels for advertising even when the PR campaign is a successful.

Rep Snyder

Indicated he was an F-22 supporter and wanted to know how he should justify such a high-dollar plane to constituents when funding is needed for education and other social programs. Called on the Services to draw up a list of reprogramming items in the FY00 Appropriations similar to the UPL. He also emphasized the need for mil to mil contacts.

Gen Ryan

Said mil to mil contacts were critically important. The program gives us access to basing and contributes to building democracies. As for the F-22, he stressed the argument should not be put in the context of having to offset social programs in order to fund it. Replied the F-22 was a program to ensure air dominance in the future.

Rep Thornberry

Warned against complacency in light of the Kosovo successes. Services need to be sure that weapons in the pipeline do in fact solve needs. Made the analogy that Ford Motor Company could bring a car from the drawing board to production within a year and military weapon programs which take considerable longer to come on line. Wanted to know if changes in procurement policy were needed. He was also chagrined at the fact that RD&T funding was being reduced at a time when high technology is surely needed in our national defense.

Rep Kuykendall

Proposed the F-22 will be challenged by Air Force missions themselves. Foresaw the Air Force concentrating more on missiles, missile defense, and satellites. He also asked the Services about the effect of the recent loss of a Milstar satellite.

Gen Ryan

Stressed that the force structure of military would not change substantially in the platforms they use. Platforms used to prosecute war will not change, but the munitions will, he explained. Said orbital and atmospheric platforms give leverage in pressure points (real time targeting) in the battlefield. As for the Milstar, Gen Ryan indicated we were looking at options to fill the gap.

Rep Bateman

Asked the Chiefs whether any decision has been made to obligate money in the FY99 Supplemental Appropriations bill set aside for expenditure in FY00.

Gen Ryan

He and the other Chiefs replied no.

Hearing concluded at 1615